

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes adding numeral 9 to Fig. 1d and numeral 11 to Fig. 1a and removing numeral 5d from Fig. 1d and numeral 15 from Fig. 1a.

Attachment:

1. Replacement Sheet;
2. Annotated Sheet showing changes.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action the drawing were objected to because circumferential ribs 9 and valve seat 11 were mentioned in the specification but were not in the drawings and elements 5d and 15 were included on the drawings but not mentioned in the specification. Amended drawings correcting these numbering errors are attached.

Claim 5 and claims 6-25 which depend from it are objected to as being in improper form because it is a multiple dependent claims which depends from another multiple dependent claim. Claim 5 has been amended to correct this.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected as being anticipated by Reeb, et al. U.S. Patent 6,990,994. Claims 3-4 are rejected as being obvious over Reeb, et al. in view of Peter, U.S. Patent 5,351,711. Claims 5-25 were not examined on the merits due to the dependency problem. Claim 1 has been amended and new independent claims 31 and 33 have been added and it is submitted that these claims are patentably distinct over the references cited in the Office Action for the reasons set forth below.

Claim 1 has been amended to limit it to the particular structure of the insert and the resiliently deformable part of the mounting adaptor. This structure is completely different from the structure disclosed in either of the references cited by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1, and claims 2-30 which depend from it are allowable.

New claim 33 is similar to original claim 1 but more particularly points out that the insert module is initially separate from the mounting adaptor, that the insert module is selected from a range of insert modules adapted to perform different functions and that all of the insert modules have an outer profile which allows one of them to be snap-fit into the deformable part of the mounting adaptor. The subject invention relates to a fitting for use with inflatable or other fluid fill structures having flexible membrane like walls. The feature covered by new claim 33 is that the fitting provides an universal mounting adaptor which can be attached to the membrane in which is configured to

receive any one of a number of different insert modules having an outer profile which allows it to be snap-fitted into the adaptor to provide a secure fluid tight connection between the adaptor and the insert. Accordingly, different types of insert modules being adapted to perform different functions can be used in the fitting. This arrangement is particularly advantages as it reduces manufacturing costs, enabling a common mounting adaptor to be attached a range of different structures in which a suitable insert is fitted as required. The arrangement also allows the insert to be replaced so that in any given structure the function performed by the insert can be changed. For example, a structure may be provided with a fitting having a pressure release valve as shown in Fig. 1a but this could be removed and replaced with an insert of the type shown in 1c having an inflation tube. None of the prior art references cited by the Examiner disclose a valve insert which can be replaced with an alternative insert to perform a different function. Accordingly, claim 33 is patentably distinct from any of the cited references.

New independent claim 31 covers an assembly comprising two structures interconnected by the fitting claimed in claim 1. Thus new claim 31 is patentable on the same basis that claim 1 is.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the application are allowable and it is requested that the claims be allowed.

The applicant submits that no extension of time is required with this amendment, but provisionally petitions for an extension of time, if necessary. Further, the applicant asserts that no additional claim fees are due with this amendment. However, if additional fees are required, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any required additional fee for any additional extension of time or additional claims to the Deposit Account No. 03-1550.

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Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendments, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date indicated below.

Dated: November 20, 2009


Charles D. McClung